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Time Running Out For Underground Tank Owners

It's crunch time! Underground storage tank owners who have not acted to replace pre-1984 tanks are facing zero hour. And, according to federal and state authorities, the December 22, 1998, deadline established ten years ago will not be extended.

The numbers of newly upgraded tanks reported by local oversight agencies to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) indicate that approximately 48 percent are still out of compliance. Owners and operators of underground tanks across the United States now have little time left to meet the deadline.

This year's December 22 deadline was initially set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ten years ago to allow tank owners time to comply with upgrade requirements. California soon followed with an identical state deadline.

Tank owners are reminded that tanks may be upgraded or replaced after the December deadline if the old tanks were properly emptied and closed prior to the deadline.

Motorists throughout California can already see bright blue and white decals in the windows of their local gas stations. The decals, about half the size of a sheet of paper, depict a white map of California on a blue background. They declare to the public and, more importantly, to fuel delivery drivers, that the tanks at the station have been upgraded or replaced and therefore are eligible to continue taking delivery of petroleum.



Underground Tanks, continued (page 2)

Landmark Central Coast Environmental Settlements Reached

This summer a pair of environmental enforcement actions affecting California's Central Coast were settled, clearing the way for cleanup and restoration work. The civil settlements — totalling nearly \$62 million — were reached with Unocal Corp. for environmental damage caused by forty years of leaking petroleum operations at Unocal's Guadalupe Oil Field in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. The settlements are believed to be the largest environmental fine in California history.

Settlements, continued (page 2)

FROM MY CORNER

*Peter M. Rooney, Secretary
for Environmental Protection*

Amending this column's title, "From my corner" I am taking the liberty this month of calling it, "From my corners." This reflects efforts this past year to get our new "home" out of the ground at the 1000 block of I Street in downtown Sacramento. As many of you know, we have been hard at work insuring not only that the building is user and customer friendly, but that it also reflects our commitment to energy efficient construction, materials, and activities. We have spent a great deal of time and effort to ensure employee concerns, as well as valid scientific data, are reflected in the best, most efficient "green design" for this showcase State building.

This issue contains pictures of our most recent site visit during construction - the drilling and placement of the concrete support pilings. We hope you enjoy the "candid" shots - more to follow in our December edition.

The articles in this issue speak for themselves and include excellent presentations by each of our Boards and Departments. Responding to rapidly changing circumstances while continuing to aggressively follow fiscal objectives proved no easy feat this past calendar year as the following articles suggest. Each Board and Department is to be commended for their pro-active, professional actions this past year.

I want to take this opportunity ask each of you to reflect on our blessings as we approach this holiday season and to remember that, at this time of year, stresses can increase without warning or expectation. Your efforts here at work are commendable and exceptional but should not overshadow your contributions to your families and friends.

As we near the close of another successful year several events will be worth noting in our year-end newsletter.



Underground Tanks (continued)

California State law prohibits the delivery of petroleum products to underground tanks out of compliance after January 1, 1999. It is essential that all facility owners, especially those depending on petroleum for providing critical services (e.g., hospitals, police and fire departments) have their tanks upgraded or replaced before this deadline. It is also essential that small communities with limited services and long distances between stations bring pressure to bear on local owners to comply by the deadline.

"Old tanks and piping are a serious threat to the State's groundwater resources," said Peter M. Rooney, Secretary for Environmental Protection. "We want to ensure the timely compliance and are very mindful of the predicaments which could be created if small operations in outlying areas think exceptions will be granted. Hence, this article and our ongoing efforts to ensure the fullest statewide compliance."

Settlements (continued)

"This action serves two important purposes: it helps to restore the ecological damage done around Avila Beach, and it underscores our belief that actions like this help to keep a level playing field for all California businesses so they will do right by the environment," said Secretary Rooney. He described the settlement work as a team effort among sister environmental agencies including the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Attorney General's office.

For more information, visit Cal/EPA's website at www.calepa.cahwnet.gov/epadocs/c-5-98.txt.

ENVIRONMENT

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Comments, suggestions or address changes can be made via fax at (916) 445-5563 or e-mail at cepacomm@calepa.ca.gov.

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Board Finds Diesel Particulates Toxic

In August the Air Resources Board (ARB) ended nearly a decade of debate and study on the health hazards of diesel exhaust with a unanimous vote declaring the fine particles in diesel fuel emissions to be toxic air contaminants. The ruling was a result of compromise by environmental and industry groups. With the decision, ARB created a working group to study ways to reduce human exposure to diesel particulate emissions. That group is expected to begin work early next year.

In a related development, the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) has issued a draft report recommending that California's Heavy Duty Vehicle Inspection Program be used as a national model for other states. California's program finds pre-1991 truck and bus engines in violation of exhaust smoke standards if they have opacity, or darkness, readings of 55 percent or greater while 1991 and newer engines are in violation at 40 percent or greater opacity. SAE plans to finalize the report in September and U.S. EPA could issue it as a formal guidance by the end of the year.

Zero Emission Vehicle and Fuel Cell Reports Available

The ARB has published progress reports on the Zero Emission Vehicle rule and Fuel Cell Technology. Both reports, released in July, detail advances in these technologies and how they hold promise of providing clean energy in the future for California. Both reports can be viewed on the ARB web site: www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/zevprog/zevprog.htm.

EV Education Sparks Student Interest in the Environment

A program to educate teachers about the electric vehicle and its role in helping California to meet health-based air quality standards has attracted more than 300 teachers in the southern California area. Through this effort, approximately 60,000 students will learn about air quality issues and EV technology along with an opportunity to build a model electric car. The program expands this fall to the San Diego and Sacramento region.

Teachers have reacted enthusiastically to the curriculum. One technology instructor said, "The electric vehicle kit excites and motivates students, which is the goal of education, and meets young students' needs to solve problems." Joining ARB in the effort are General Motors, Southern California Edison, the Coalition for Clean Air, the American Lung Association of Los Angeles, the L.A. Department of Water and Power, Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee, and EV Media, a Santa Monica-based company that created the curriculum materials. For more information, contact ARB's Office of Communications: (916) 322-2990.



Students at Mission Viejo High School check out electric vehicles as part of the EV Education effort in southern California.

Cal/EPA Scientists Study Health Effects of MTBE

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment is evaluating the health effects of MTBE for the development of a Public Health Goal (PHG) in drinking water. MTBE, an oxygenate, is added to gasoline to help fuel burn cleaner by reducing tailpipe emissions. Oxygenated gasoline is required by Federal law in certain non-attainment areas. A PHG is a concentration in water not anticipated to produce adverse health effects after long-term or lifetime exposure. A draft document is available for review during two public comment periods and it was also discussed at a public workshop. Based on the PHG, the Department of Health Services will establish an enforceable primary drinking water standard (Maximum Contaminant Level, or MCL) for MTBE by July 1999 to meet the requirement of the Local Drinking Water Protection Act of 1997.

OEHHA is also evaluating MTBE under Proposition 65 and developing two hazard identification documents, which involve reviews by two OEHHA Science Advisory Board Committees (Carcinogen Identification Committee and the Developmental and Reproductive Toxicant Identification Committee), a public meeting, and preparation for listing activities.

For further information on OEHHA's efforts and contribution in this area see our website at www.calepa.cahwnet.gov/oehha/.

INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Californians Keep Record Amount of Garbage Out of Landfills

In 1990 California was running out of landfill space. Reports showed that 40 percent of the state's population would not have a home for their garbage unless waste management practices changed dramatically. As a result, cities and counties began implementing the most comprehensive and sweeping recycling programs the state had ever seen.

Since then, recycling and waste reduction in California has brought about dramatic changes. The Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB), the state's primary recycling agency, recently announced that since 1990, residents have kept a record 100 million tons of waste out of landfills, equivalent to the amount of garbage thrown out every three years and enough to fill a line of garbage trucks that would circle the globe more than three times.

"This is truly an historic accomplishment," said IWMB Chairman Daniel G. Pennington. "We couldn't have diverted so much trash from our landfills if millions of Californians didn't faithfully recycle their newspapers, beverage containers, plastic jugs and other commodities. And with more and more people learning about composting and using mulching lawn mowers, to eliminate most of our yard waste from landfills, it will take even less time to divert another 100 million tons."

In 1989 Assembly Bill 939 was signed into law, mandating that cities and counties develop plans to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills by 25 percent in 1995 and by 50 percent by the year 2000. Nearly 50 communities have already achieved that 50 percent mark. Statewide, 32 percent of California's waste is diverted from landfills, exceeding the national average of 30 percent.

The business sector, which generates more than 50 percent of the state's waste, has also played a critical role in the state's recycling success. One example is the NCR Corporation in San Diego County. Since 1994, the company has saved more than half a million dollars in disposal costs by recycling 78 percent of its trash. This has included recycling paper, plastic, and metal scraps, as well as computer circuit boards, test equipment, fluorescent lights and light ballasts, and composting all greenwaste. The Doubletree Hotel in Monterey is another fine example of businesses cutting waste and saving money. The seaside hotel recycles or reuses virtually every waste item generated. In fact, recently the hotel recycled nearly 400 toilets, preventing 15 tons of porcelain from ending up in the local landfill.

In all, keeping 100 million tons of waste out of landfills — one ton every second since 1990 — has helped California go from a State facing a landfill crisis in 1990 to one with enough space for its garbage for at least 28 years. IWMB noted that the amount diverted is equivalent to the amount of garbage sent to landfills in three years.

Outreach to Protect Water Quality from “Home to Ocean”

Urban pesticide use can create serious pollution problems. Consumers sometimes carelessly pour excess pesticides down the drain or into the gutter. Pesticide runoff from lawns and other surfaces flows down storm drains. Because sewage treatment plants typically do not treat wastewater for pesticides, residues pass into rivers, estuaries, and bays, harming the aquatic food chain and wildlife habitat; jeopardizing the recreational use of rivers and lakes; and possibly contaminating drinking water. Such pollution can be costly for water districts and ratepayers. If treatment plants fail to meet water quality objectives, districts may face fines ranging up to thousands of dollars per day.

To protect urban water quality by promoting safe use and disposal of pesticides used in homes and gardens, Cal/EPA's Department of Pesticide Regulation recently released the *H₂O Home to Ocean* workbook. This is a comprehensive guide for wastewater treatment plants on how to launch a public education campaign or enhance an existing outreach program for water quality. DPR has distributed free copies to about 775 publicly owned treatment works (POTW) throughout California.

The guide includes:

- Camera-ready brochures, bill inserts, a poster and other materials presented in English and Spanish.
- Cost-benefit analyses for various communications tools, ranging from public service announcements to billboards to the Internet.
- A media relations primer, including tips on developing articles and contacts with print and broadcast reporters and editors.
- Resource and reference materials for POTWs that offer more information about integrated pest management (IPM) and specific reduced-risk pest control methods.
- A case study of a successful California POTW outreach program.

Soon materials may be viewed or downloaded from the *H₂O Home to Ocean* web site currently being developed at www.home2ocean.org.



STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

Environmental Progress Seen on Mexico-California Border

Interacting with their Mexican counterparts, the Boards and Departments of Cal/EPA under the leadership of Cal/EPA Secretary Peter M. Rooney have proactively addressed environmental problems at the Mexico-California border.

With the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), changes began to occur in communities along the border. The Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADBANK) were created focusing on identifying and resolving environmental infrastructure problems associated with water delivery, wastewater treatment and municipal solid waste.

In response to forming the BECC and NADBANK, the Governors of California, Baja California and Baja California Sur, formed the California Border Environmental Cooperation Committee (Cal/BECC), an organization to identify, promote and

Mexico-California Border, continued (page 6)

Mexico-California Border (continued)

seek financing for environmental infrastructure projects of mutual concern along the border.

Cal/EPA and the State of Baja California recently published a report identifying 65 projects on both sides of the border. Six were certified by the BECC and have either received or are in the process of receiving NADBANK construction monies.

In addition to infrastructure projects, Cal/BECC works with the Border Coordinators Group, a bi-state organization of the environment, resources and health agencies that have interests or work in the border region. This group's projects have included bi-national workshops on hazardous waste, pollution prevention, recycling, pesticide incident response plans, air monitoring and wastewater monitoring and pre-treatment program for the City of Tijuana. Cal/BECC is viewed as a model of cross-border communication and cooperation for other U.S. and Mexican border states and its role continues to expand.

Most recently, Cal/BECC was asked to coordinate scientists and researchers on both sides of the border working on the restoration of the Salton Sea.

In addition to participating in Cal/BECC, Cal/EPA Boards and Departments provide technical assistance and support to counterparts in Baja California. Significant technical assistance efforts are underway at the State Water Resources Control Board, the Air Resources Board and the Department of Toxic Substances Control.

DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL

Governor Speaks to National Meth Lab Responders Course

Governor Wilson addressed the first national training course for first responders to illegal clandestine drug labs at the 9th Annual Continuing Challenge Conference in Sacramento on September 8-11.

The Governor told attendees that he is committed to battling the environmental and health threats of meth labs. "That's why I've made an all-out assault on meth production a cornerstone of this Administration's war on crime," said Wilson. The Governor outlined a measure that would increase the penalties for illegal clandestine labs, and the 1998-99 budget allocation of \$10 million to DTSC for lab cleanups



Governor Wilson, Cal/EPA Secretary, Peter Rooney, DTSC Director, Jesse Huff, and DTSC staff member Rick Jones view chemicals confiscated at a meth drug lab.

Contamination Inquiry Continues at LA Schools

The DTSC recently began investigating possible soil, groundwater, and air contamination at the Suva Elementary School in Bell Gardens. Area residents have voiced concerns about possible toxic contamination from a chrome plating facility adjacent to the school.

A previous DTSC investigation at the Jefferson Middle School in South Central Los Angeles revealed soil and groundwater contamination. Jefferson was built on land previously used by a furniture manufacturer and is located across the street from a former chrome plating facility. Cleanup was required before the new school opened.

Jefferson was one of nine schools in LA County cited in a report from the State Legislature's Joint Legislative Audit Committee. The Committee concluded that environmental reviews and investigations conducted by the local school district before the properties were bought were inadequate. DTSC Director Jesse Huff has committed to analyze and review the locations to determine if contaminants are present at the schools.

Cal/EPA Building Update

- With demolition work completed at the site of the new Cal/EPA building, the next phase of the project is pile driving. To support the enormous weight of the new 950,000 square foot structure, a foundation system consisting of 650 pre-stressed, pre-cast concrete piles must be driven into the earth to a depth of 75 feet.
- Consultants and several Cal/EPA boards are reviewing the best ways to implement many of the proposed "green" features of the building.
- Internationally-recognized environmental artist Beverly Pepper has been selected to create the central work of public art for the building's plaza. The artist's proposal envisions four monumental stones (up to 60 feet high) rising from an earthen mound surrounded by stone steps and seating area. The artist feels that the artwork, which will be adjacent to a grove of sequoias, must create "a place that invites people in, while retaining its separate identity." Ms. Pepper's daughter, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, Jorie Graham, may contribute text to be used in or around the project.

Top: Cal/EPA Secretary Peter Rooney inspects the concrete piles that will help support the foundation of the new Cal/EPA building.

Bottom: Secretary Rooney discusses the demolition work at the building site.



Permit Assistance Centers

Lillian Conroe, Director

Business Revitalization Center

(213) 290-7100

Roberta James, Director

Contra Costa Regional

(925) 229-5950

Pete Ruggerello, Director

Fresno Area

(209) 498-1343

Matt McCarron, Director

Greater Oakland

(510) 286-6993

Shereef Aref, Director

Inland Empire

Ontario Office

(909) 937-0723

Riverside Office

(909) 955-1883

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(805) 862-5175

Matt McCarron, Director

North Bay

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Daniam Hopp, Director

Orange County

(714) 834-2840

Leslie Manderscheid, Director

San Diego Regional

(619) 236-5938

Director

San Fernando Valley

(818) 756-7572

Peter Frey, Director

Santa Clara Valley

(408) 277-1477

Daniam Hopp, Director

South Orange County

(714) 461-3560

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Cal/EPA Ombudsman Directory

Air Resources Board

Jim Schoning

(916) 323-6791

Nancy Steele (Deputy-South)

(626) 459-4868

Department of Pesticide Regulation

Regina Sarracino (Registration)

(916) 324-3939

Kay Cummins (Licensing)

(916) 323-6133

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Southern California

John Hinton

(714) 484-5365

Northern California

Carol Northrup

(510) 540-3919

Integrated Waste Management Board

Chris Peck

(916) 255-2427

Office of Environmental Health

Hazard Assessment

Bev Passerello

(916) 324-1945

Cynthia Oshita

Proposition 65 Implementation

(916) 445-6900

State Water Resources Control Board

Jim Bennett

(916) 657-1287

Regional Water Quality Control Boards

Craig Johnson

(707) 576-2226

Will Bruhns

Region 2 (San Francisco Bay)

(510) 286-0838

Paul Jagger

Region 3 (Central Coast)

(805) 549-3502

Jim Koyilendall

Region 4 (Los Angeles)

(323) 266-7632

Tom Pinkos

Region 5 (Central Valley)

(916) 255-3039

Bob Dodds

Region 6 (Lahontan)

(530) 542-5410

Gary Morris

Region 7 (Colorado River)

(760) 776-8926

Kurt Berchtold

Region 8 (Santa Ana)

(909) 782-3286

Mike McCann

Region 9 (San Diego)

(619) 467-2988

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Reporting an Environmental Accident/Incident

Office of Emergency Services	(916) 262-1621
Warning Center	(916) 262-1621
Water Pollution	1-800-952-5400
South Coast AQMD	1-800-CUT-SMOG

Reporting an Environmental Crime/Violation

Toxics	(916) 324-2448
Illegal Handling of Hazardous Waste	1-800-69-TOXIC
Sacramento	(916) 255-3618
Berkeley	(510) 540-3739
Glendale	(818) 551-2800
Cypress	(714) 484-5400
Air Pollution	(916) 322-6022 (916) 322-6034
Complaint Hot Line	1-800-952-5588
Water Pollution	1-800-952-5400
Landfills	(916) 255-2431
Pesticides	(916) 445-3920
Smoking Vehicles	1-800-END-SMOG
Cellular (statewide)	#SMOG

CAL/EPA BOARD & DEPARTMENT WEBSITES

Cal/EPA

<http://www.calepa.ca.gov>

Air Resources Board

<http://www.arb.ca.gov>

Integrated Waste Management Board

<http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov>

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

<http://www.oehha.org>

Department of Pesticide Regulation

<http://www.cdpr.ca.gov>

State Water Resources Control Board

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>

Department of Toxic Substances Control

<http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/dtsc.htm>

CAL/EPA ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE

1-800-CLEANUP (Nationwide)

<http://www.1800cleanup.org>



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